



Tar River Baptist Association Strategy

February 2012

What is Transformational Church?

The Transformational Church initiative began with an extensive research project involving 7,000 churches, 250 pastor and staff interviews and 20,000 church member surveys. Once the data was organized and evaluated, insights emerged into God's work of transforming lives and congregations.

The Transformational Church initiative seeks to use the research to assist churches toward greater growth and impact for the Kingdom of Christ. Our goal is to help churches engage God's mission more faithfully to see transformation of individual lives through the proclamation of the Gospel, churches as they join God on mission, and communities so that "the name and fame of Jesus" might be more widely known.

The overarching aim of all our efforts has been detailed in the following statement describing what "transformation" actually looks like:

"Transformational church is....."

People becoming more like Christ.

Churches acting more like the Body of Christ.

Communities reflecting the Kingdom of God."

Over the next few years, the Baptist Convention will be developing a "new score card." What shape that will ultimately take is unsure. However, that should be the least concern of the local church. The local church should only be concerned with obedience to the effect of God to become the church God would have you to be. The Transformational Church process is an effective way to begin changing the conversation in your church and ultimately the values of your church. From your core values come the actions of the church.

It is my prayer that you will become excited about the possibilities of genuine transformation in your church! Thom Rainer says, "The truth is that transformation is non-negotiable for the Christian church." I concur with that statement and fully believe the Transformational Assessment will help you understand HOW your church perceives herself based on seven elements discovered through the process:

- Missionary Mindset
- Vibrant Leadership
- Prayerful Dependence
- Relational Intentionality
- Worship
- Community
- Mission

As you examine the perceptions of your church, my further prayer is that those perceptions – along with the truths of God's Word – will serve as a catalyst towards real transformation taking place in the local church. On the back of this sheet is a model process we suggest for your church to become engaged in the Transformational Church process. Naturally, the TC process developed within your church will come from consultation with pastor and church leadership before a "plan-of-action" is in place.

Steps For Your Church To Become Involved In The Transformational Church Process

1. Invite your Associational Missionary (AM) to speak with you as pastor and/or the leadership of your church regarding the process. In this meeting, additional information will be shared concerning the TCAT assessment tool; the recent history of your church; and demographic information regarding the community you serve.
2. If the church decides to go forward with the TCAT assessment, the Associational Missionary will share how to order the materials. **There is a cost to the TCAT itself, but there is no charge for the consulting the AM will do in working with your church as a member church of the association. There is no real value in taking the TCAT without the benefit of consultation with the AM, as he will receive information you will not receive.**

It should be noted that there are up to 10 church-specific questions that can be added to the original TCAT. There is much advantage to you as a church to strategically use these questions to develop long range planning, etc. for your church. The AM will discuss with the pastor/leadership of the church prior to making the order.

3. Once the church has taken the TCAT, the AM will review the information and set up a second meeting with the pastor. *There will be conversation with the pastor as to whether he wants additional staff or church leaders in this meeting. If not, a third meeting that involves the pastor and staff (and possibly key church leaders) will be set up to review the information and discuss both the findings and the “next steps.”*

To minimize sampling error in the TCAT, it is recommended that the following serve as the guide as to the number of people needed to complete the assessment, based on the size of your church:

Average Attendance	Minimum Assessments	Ideal Goal
67	33	44
100	43	63
150	55	94
200	60	109
250	65	130

4. From the TCAT assessment, review with the pastor and staff, 25 – 30 participants will be asked to attend a “Discovery Retreat” where the TCAT is summarized; participants dialogue the results, determine priorities from the results for each of the seven elements; provide an action statement regarding each summary. The AM will take these results for further study and develop several scenario for “action plans” based on the listings of the retreat participants.
5. The AM will meet with the pastor, staff, and other key leaders (possibly) to discuss the possible action plans from the TCAT findings, the Retreat results, and the barriers that might exist. Ultimately, from this discussion what will be taken back to the church as action plans for the church approval will be finalized and prioritized?
6. The AM will take the action plans back to the church (the actual way of delivery will be addressed as we set up the process for each individual church) for approval. The AM will walk alongside the church as it implements the action plans offering counsel, coaching, and resources available through the associational office.
7. Recognizing that this is a PROCESS and not a “once-and-for-all fix-it till Jesus comes” activity, it is recommended that there be annual review by the key leadership of the church (and perhaps repeats of the process on a periodic basis).

“People acting more like Jesus.....Churches acting more like the body of Christ.....

and Communities reflecting the Kingdom Of God.”